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## HISTORICAL FRAGMENTS

### THE STATE HOSPITAL FOR THE INSANE AND THE WAR

Though in a sense isolated from the world, the Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane is, indeed, in such intimate contact with the outside that every shock which disturbs the serenity of our national affairs is immediately felt within the walls of the institution. Whatever is uppermost in the popular mind is mirrored, in a distorted fashion, to be sure, in the minds of those mentally unbalanced. War, pestilence, and famine, romance, political and financial changes, and a host of imaginary ills, as well, all play an important part in the mental aberrations of the world.

Formerly the great questions of religion were disturbing influences upon normal life, and, naturally, the various delusions of the insane centered largely around the absorbing questions of Christ, the Apostles, and the souls of the dead. Today electricity and its various devices, including the telephone and the dictaphone, and just recently the aeroplane and the submarine have become attractive subjects of insane delusions.

With the outbreak of hostilities and the appearance of delusions about the Great War, the laity have assumed that the war was the cause of insanity; that "he has gone crazy over the war," even though it is four thousand miles away. "For," they argue, "isn't it plain that this fellow imagines himself suspected of being a spy? That this other fellow imagines he has been providentially commissioned to 'get the Kaiser'? And that this one imagines that he has been ordained 'Leader of the Light' and is able to stop the war? What could be plainer than that these men have gone crazy over the war?" In point of fact, religion, patent rights, perpetual motion, electricity, war, are only convenient hobbyhorses for the insane to ride. The real cause of the mental upset is rooted in the unstable nervous make-up of the individual. In other words, the particular mental condition which maintains at the time of an outbreak of insanity in no sense can be ascribed as the cause of the mental upset. While the mental status may be the occasion of the

attack, or may have assisted in the attack, the most probable cause, barring injury, poison, or exhaustion, is a mental make-up predisposed to disease by bad heredity.

If we assume that the war is the cause of insanity, then reports ought to show a largely increased number of insane in our hospitals, particularly in Wisconsin, whose troops suffered heartbreaking losses in the battles of the Marne and the Argonne. But reports do not bear out this assumption. If we compare the total number of admissions to this hospital for the period of our participation in war with a like period prior to the declaration of war, we find a reduction of 58, or 11.3 per cent. By examining the report more closely, I find that the number of original female admissions for the two periods mentioned was exactly the same, whereas the falling off was confined exclusively to male admissions, a fact which, by the way, does not accord with the popular belief that women are more prone to insanity than men are.

This reduction in the number of male admissions has a very plausible, possibly an interesting and an instructive, explanation in the changes in our economic relations during the war. I refer to the prohibition of the manufacture of liquors. For the fiscal year ending June 30, 1918, the number of admissions in the group of alcoholic insane was forty-three as compared with ninety-five for the year ending June 30, 1917. Here is a reduction of 54.7 per cent. The increased cost of liquor following the government prohibition and the rapid extension of dry territory are facts sufficiently strong to account for this important change. It is safe to predict that the still further improvement in this respect which doubtless will follow the consumption of the surplus stock of whiskey and the consummation of national prohibition will prove to be a decisive and a thrilling demonstration of the wisdom and justice of the national prohibition movement.

Let me turn, now, to our war activities. At the outbreak of hostilities, Dr. W. F. Lorenz, director of the Psychiatric Institute, was commissioned Captain by Governor Philipp. He recruited a hospital unit from the employes of this institution and from men of the University and the city of Madison. At one fell stroke fifteen men were taken from our ranks. This unit was attached to

the fighting Thirty-second Division, "Division Terrible," of the French, and served as first aid back of the fighting line. They saw service from Chateau Thierry to Coblenz. I am glad to record the names of our Honor Roll:

|                   |                |               |
|-------------------|----------------|---------------|
| GEORGE BOESE      | FREDERICK FOY  | JAMES LUSTER  |
| WALTER HORSTMAYER | LUTHER CLAYTON | HARRY HOWE    |
| GEORGE KEARNEY    | EDWIN JOHNSON  | CECIL TAFF    |
| GUS PASICKA       | O. H. HERBERT  | ERNEST KRAITZ |
| LLOYD WEBBER      | WM. VOLKMAN    | CARL HOFFMAN  |

The following men enlisted later in other branches of service: Earl Carter, Robert Dovre, Ray Toban, Lawrence Toban, and John Hoffman. In addition to these names, I might add, with propriety, the name of Herbert Cramer, son of Hospital Steward P. D. Cramer. Herbert Cramer served as lieutenant of infantry at Camp Custer. Also, the name of Ronald I. Drake, son of the Superintendent, who served as electrician on the United States transport *Agamemnon*.

Naturally, the loss of so many employes crippled our service sorely. Extra hours and more strenuous duties were thrust upon the shoulders of those left in charge of patients, and, though the Board of Control generously increased the wages of male attendants by forty per cent, I have been unable since to raise our full quota of male attendants. Indeed, help became so scarce that I was driven to the necessity of discharging some of our more reliable patients, and placing them on the payroll.

Fortunately my medical staff was not disturbed.

Through these trying times we have not sat by impassive spectators of the world's debauchery. If we have not actually borne arms, nor been in the midst of bursting shrapnel, we have, at least, busied ourselves to supply means for those physically better able to do so. It is with no little pride that I refer to the splendid financial showing made by the officers and employes of the hospital. They were asked to contribute what they felt able to give—no urging or prodding was permitted—and here is the itemized result:

|                                     |            |
|-------------------------------------|------------|
| Thrift and War Savings Stamps.....  | \$5,363.00 |
| First and Second Liberty Loans..... | 8,400.00   |
| Third Liberty Loan.....             | 7,550.00   |
| Fourth Liberty Loan.....            | 9,000.00   |
| United War Workers' Fund.....       | 372.34     |

|                                            |          |
|--------------------------------------------|----------|
| First Red Cross Fund.....                  | \$134.25 |
| Second Red Cross Fund.....                 | 100.00   |
| Tobacco Fund for Our Boys.....             | 54.50    |
| Toward truck for Lorenz Hospital Unit..... | 140.00   |

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Total .....\$31,114.09

With the exception of two or three of the smaller items, the work of collecting this money was done by P. D. Cramer, Hospital Steward. We have "over the top" banners of the Third and Fourth Liberty Loans.

In these dark hours of the world's Gethsemane, we were not unmindful of the physical comfort of the boys "over there." Much credit must be given to the female patients and employes who have responded so generously to the call of the Red Cross for help. In this connection, too, I take pleasure in submitting a detailed statement of the work done. But for a lack of knitting yarn, this amount might have been increased considerably:

**SURGICAL DRESSINGS:**

|                        |       |
|------------------------|-------|
| Muslin dressings ..... | 1,062 |
| Gauze " .....          | 2,525 |

**KNITTED GARMENTS:**

|                 | Patients | Employes |
|-----------------|----------|----------|
| Sweaters .....  | 104      | 43       |
| Scarfs .....    | 1        | 1        |
| Helmets .....   | 7        | 4        |
| Wristlets ..... | 23 prs.  | 18 prs.  |
| Socks .....     | 49 "     | 114 "    |

All of our efforts, moreover, to carry out the suggestions of the Food Conservation Commission met with perfect success. Notwithstanding the fact that flour substitutes were used, the supply of meats limited, and the sugar ration employed, not a word of complaint reached me from either patients or employes. All were eager to do their utmost to checkmate the swashbucklering leader of the Huns. The patients as well as officers and employes felt that they had to support their dear ones in France who were fighting for the triumph of right over wrong, for the victory of the moral uplift of mankind over the demoralization of brute force; who were fighting, in truth, against a most implacable foe whose resurrection of the powers of damnation had put to shame the unspeakable crimes of barbarism itself.

The war is over and the victory won. Those of us who were obliged to remain at home must be satisfied to have done here all in our power to usher in a brighter and a better day; but money and material and self-denial are but poor sacrifices to lay on the altar of our country beside the lives of Liberty's heroic dead. One sublime sacrifice has made immortal their devotion. Upon them shall rest, forever, the gratitude and the benediction of a world redeemed.

FRANK I. DRAKE, *Superintendent.*

### THE POTTER-PRYOR DUEL

Ridicule is sometimes a better means of destroying an obsolescent and mischievous institution than argument. Cervantes dealt a death-blow to knight errantry when he related the wanderings of Don Quixote and Sancho Panza. It fell to the lot of a Wisconsin congressman, in the last years before the Civil War, to deal a similar blow to the Southern "chivalry," and the code duello. The fire-eating antagonist of this farce (for so it proved to be) died in March in New York City, where he had passed a long and honored career of post bellum activity, as part of the state judiciary. He never relinquished his devotion to the "lost cause," nor failed to expound the philosophical right of secession, but it is not recorded that after his encounter with John Fox Potter, of the First Congressional District of Wisconsin, he ever again sought "the satisfaction due a gentleman" who considers his "honor" wounded. It all occurred in those last thrilling days before the Civil War, when Congress was itself a battle ground between North and South, sometimes not merely a battle of tongues and ideas, but the frequent scene of fist-cuff and bludgeon encounters between the hostile parties. The occasion of one of these disgraceful mêlées was an antislavery speech made April 5, 1860, in the House of Representatives by Owen Lovejoy, brother of the abolition martyr of Illinois. Lovejoy's diatribe was perhaps the most direct and bitter attack upon slave-owners ever made in Congress, and the blood of the irascible Southerners was raised to the boiling point. Epithets like "black-hearted scoundrel" and "nigger-stealing thief" began to fly, and as Lovejoy in the passion of his denunciation advanced towards the Democrats shaking his forefinger in their direction, Roger A. Pryor, a young representative